

FROM *Superstition and Slavery*, great  
Subjects of **THANKSGIVING**:

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A  
**S E R M O N,**

PREACHED IN THE

PARISH-CHURCH of BEXLEY, in *Kent*,

ON

The 9th of **OCTOBER**, MDCCXLVI.

The Day appointed by HIS MAJESTY for a *General Thanksgiving*  
for the *Suppression of the Rebellion*.

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By **HENRY PIERS**, A.M. Vicar of the Parish.

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CONCLUDING WITH

An **ANTHEM**, collected on the Occasion:

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O come, let us sing unto the LORD, let us *heartily* rejoice in the  
*Strength of our Salvation*. Psa. xcv. 1.

For He hath given Victory unto Our KING, and hath deliver'd  
**GEORGE** his Servant from the Peril of the Sword. Ps. cxliv. 11.

The LORD looked down from Heaven, He beheld, and visited his  
*Vine*, and the *Place of his Vineyard*; that His *Right-Hand* had  
planted. Ps. lxxx. 14, 15.

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PSALM cvii. 2.

*Let them give Thanks, whom the LORD  
hath redeemed and delivered from the  
Hand of the Enemy.*

**O** PRAISE the LORD, for it is a good  
Thing to sing Praises unto our GOD; yea, a  
joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.

A joyful and pleasant thing indeed! A great  
Blessing, that GOD is good to his unworthy Crea-  
tures. And still, a greater Blessing, to *those*, whom  
by his Grace in their Hearts, he makes *sensible* of  
his Goodness towards them. "That GOD is  
good," is what the whole Voice of Nature de-  
clares. The inanimate Creation, even the *Outgo-  
ings of the Morning and Evening* do praise Him.  
The Animal Nature joins (with the Birds in parti-  
cular) to praise Him with their artless Tongue.  
Yea, the whole Scale of Beings which continued  
in their *primitive* State, do laud and bless the  
Hand that made them—that not only made them,  
but made them happy — *happy* in a Communica-  
tion of his own Happiness and Goodness. All but  
Man! and *that*, because he is fallen out of this  
happy Dependence on his GOD; the Devil having  
spoke another (a wretched) Happiness, in a Spirit  
of *Independence*, in those baneful Words, *Eat, Ye  
shall be Gods yourselves.*

2. MAN therefore in his *natural State* cannot  
thank GOD: *Ingratitude* and *Ungodliness* are *miserable*  
*Companions*: *Unthankful, unboly* always go to-  
gether †. At least, the *natural Man* cannot thank

† 2 Tim. iii. 2.



God as he *should* be thanked, *viz.* with the Love and Devotion of his Heart—with the Praise of his Life—with the Obedience of his Actions—*by giving up himself to his Service, and by walking before Him in Holiness and Righteousness all his Days.*

3. No: the *natural Man* can no more thank God for Mercies received, than he can humble his Soul under his chastizing Hand. He can no more praise God, than he can repent. He can no more thank God than he can obey his Commandments (but notwithstanding, let him *ask* and it shall be given him, let him *rise and be doing, and the LORD will be with him*): He can no more magnify the LORD, than he can *deny himself*. In a Word, he is as incapable of Thanksgiving *now*, as of Humiliation when called upon to *fast*.<sup>a</sup> And if he *must needs* thank God, it must be by *Substitutes*, poor Substitutes, for a thankful Heart—such Substitutes as he *worships*, and *prays*, and *repents* by. If he *must needs* thank God, it must be either in an awkward, a ridiculous, and an irrational Way; such as by firing Guns, or ringing Bells; or Bonfires, Illuminations and a rabble Rout: (the *Propriety* of which to, or Connection with, the true Praise of God, it would puzzle a reasonable Man to make out): Or it must be done in *such* a Manner, as shall give more Glory to Man than to God—more Glory to the *conquering* People, (for “*we did it!*”) than to the *only Giver of all Victory, through the Merits of his only SON*—more Glory to the weak Instrument than to the Almighty Agent—more Glory to the General than to the LORD of Hosts: as if *the Axe should boast itself against him that beareth therewith, or the Saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it, or as if the Rod should shake itself against him that lifteth it*

<sup>a</sup> See the Author's *Fast Sermon*.



up, or as if the Staff should lift up itself, as if it were no Wood." Or in a Word, if the natural Man must needs thank God, it must be still worse, (for he can do nothing right, as to God, 'till he is taught of GOD) it must be in a more provoking sinful way (if possible) even by Riot and Excess, by Gluttony and Extravagance, by Debauchery and Drunkenness; making a wicked Return for God's Goodness to him: or making his very Love and Mercies an Occasion of heaping up Vengeance and Wrath, which one Day or other will fall on the Head of such *Thanksgivers*. So just is the Observation of Him, who said, "We deter God, or make Him backward to confer Blessings upon us, lest we should make thereof an Occasion of greater Sin by our *Manner* of thanking Him."

4. BUT who are they that thank God *properly*? Even they *only*, who have a Work of Grace in their Hearts—they, who humbled by the Spirit of God into the Knowledge of Themselves, *know* Themselves unworthy of the common Blessings of Life; and accordingly receive such Benefits as we this Day commemorate, with deep Humility, overflowing Gratitude, and unfeigned Obedience.

5. WHILE the *true* Christian praises his God daily, yea momentarily, for his common Blessings to Himself and Others—for his Creation, Preservation; for Health, Food and Rayment; but principally for the *Blessings* of the *Gospel*—the *present* invaluable Blessings of Grace, Peace and Love, through JESUS CHRIST: the *formal*, the *nominal* Christian—or the Ungodly, the Unbeliever, is little affected with a Sense of these Things; yea, thinks of one JESUS (through whom they are all derived upon us) with as much Indifference as the *Heathen Festus* did: and receives even those

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Gifts of God, in which his own Happiness consists, and which he prizes ten thousand Times more than Jesus and his Gospel—the *Bread that perisheth*, the abused Cloathing of that Body that must lie down in the Dust; he receives them, I say, from God, not with so much Sense of Gratitude, as the *Ox that knoweth his Owner*, or the *Ass*, that acknowledgeth his Master's Crib.

6. WHILE the *real Christian*, or even He that is earnestly seeking to be *such*, is always happy under a Sense of God's Care and Protection—whilst he is happy, *that the LORD is KING*—that He who created the Heavens and the Earth is HIS King—that his God's particular Providence *numbereth the Hairs of his Head*—that he and all that he has are the Objects of his Wisdom and Love—while he knows, *that all things work together for good to them that seek and love God*; and therefore *in every thing giveth Him Thanks*: The *nominal*, the *formal Christian*, who *so* loves God and Mammon—who *so* serves God, at the same time that his greater *Desire* is to make *Provision for the Flesh*, to fulfil the Lust thereof: not to mention (what is the greatest Absurdity) those Christians, who have not even the *Form* of Godliness—these fancied, *outside Christians* are so far from thanking Him, that they murmur and repine at God's Dispensations, even while He is *filling their Bellies with his hid Treasure*—like greedy thankless Dogs, *while they are devouring their stolen Prey*. For indeed, no better are all the Blessings of Riches and Grandeur to those, who receive them without the proper Returns of Love, Obedience, and Thanksgiving. They are but so many Goods *snatched* or *stolen* (with the forbidden Fruit) from God. As the poor Wretch's Life is a continued *Robbery* of God, so he thanks Him

not

not for what he acknowledges not as his Gift, and though his whole Happiness consists in *what* and *how* he must eat, and what he must drink, and what he must put on — yet he sits down to his luxurious Table without looking up to the Hand that *filleteth all things living with Plenteousness*. He falls on his sumptuous Fare, with the Gratitude of a Swine, and has his gay Cloathing, [his Purple and fine Linnen] put on him, as a Horse is covered with rich Trappings.

7. Who are they then, I ask, that thank God properly? Not they, 'tis plain, who enjoy most of the Blessings of this Life, though very proper Subjects of Thanksgiving: but *they*, whose Hearts are full of Grace and Love — they who having experienced his pardoning Love, love much again, even *because they have much forgiven* — they who know that God is good, not in the general only (as some speculate) but good to *Themselves* — they who have experienced the Blessing of Blessings, *i. e.* who know the LORD, *i. e.* who experience JESUS a Saviour from Sin<sup>c</sup> — CHRIST their Prophet, Priest, and King in the Power of these his Divine Names and Offices — who know what *that* meaneth, Son, *thy Sins are forgiven thee, go, and sin no more*; or who know that the Gospel is, *the Power of GOD to Salvation*;<sup>d</sup> or that it is indeed, the Knowledge of Salvation by the Forgiveness of Sin<sup>e</sup> to every one that believeth.

8. THEY are the Congregation of Saints that praise Him. For it becometh well the *Just to be thankful*. Let us then, my Brethren, if we would thank God as we should *this Day*; or, in short, do any other Service to him, that he will accept — let us look to be *Christians indeed*; that is, (as

<sup>c</sup> Matth. i. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. i. 16.

<sup>e</sup> Luc. i. 77.



the Word implies) Persons *anointed*<sup>f</sup> with the Spirit of CHRIST—*anointed into* the Mind that was in CHRIST; or baptized *into* Him<sup>g</sup>, *into* the Power of his Divine Names and Offices, as I have said; or as the Apostle says, *into* the Power of his *Death and Resurrection*<sup>g</sup>. In fine, let us *first seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*<sup>h</sup>—both the *imputed* and *imparted* Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, which will beget in us the Love of God and our Neighbour:—And *then* we shall have *Hearts* to praise Him for all other additional Blessings also, such as that is, for which we are met to praise Him this Day.

9. Now having *prefaced* the proper Disposition of Heart, in which we are to thank God for *any* Benefits (for he that *thus* offereth Him Thanks and Praise, *honoureth* Him) and without which this Day's Assembly in particular, is but a mocking of God, and a Provocation of his *further* Wrath and Displeasure—

LET us consider, what great Reason we have to offer up most hearty Thanks to God on *this* Occasion:

And then, secondly, *how* we should express our Gratitude to Him for this great Deliverance.

*First* then, Let us consider what great Reason we have to offer up most hearty Thanks to *Almighty GOD* on this Occasion. For indeed, if *Liberty* be a Blessing—if the Redemption of our Liberty from *French* Tyranny and Slavery—the Redemption of our Lives from Fire and Sword, from Racks and Death—the Redemption of our Religion from *Popish* Superstition and damnable

<sup>f</sup> *χρίσμα*, 1 Joh. ii. 20, *Chrism*, CHRIST, *Christian*. See where the *Essence* of Christianity lies: without *This* it is but *Name* and *Notion*. No Wonder then, that *Deism* is so popular, so well received.

<sup>g</sup> Rom. vi. 3.

<sup>h</sup> — iii. 21, 22.

Error; from Idolatry and *unscriptural* Tradition; from *venial* Licentiousness, and Impurity of Life—If *these* be great Subjects of Praise and Thanksgiving, let us give Thanks, *Us*, whom the LORD hath redeemed and delivered from the Hand of the Enemy! For indeed, if the LORD Himself had not been on our Side, when Men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up Quick, being so wrathfully displeased at us: But praised be the LORD, who hath not given us over for a Prey unto their Teeth. Our Soul is escaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler; the Snare is broken, and we are delivered.

12. GOD did indeed *solely* threaten us; the destroying Angel had well nigh reach'd our Capital City—the *too-much-prided-in* Glory of our Land: But Mercy has prevailed against Judgment *hitherto* (such is his Forbearance and Long-suffering!) to see if we will yet return unto Him by Repentance, and testify that Repentance by its meet Fruits—our *Fitness* for Mercy, and (together with Faith in Christ) for the Gospel in particular; for the preparatory Voice to the Gospel is, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand<sup>i</sup>—to see, I say, if we will repent and be converted, and testify our Repentance, not only by the Amendment of our Lives in general, but by the Correction of *that Sin of Sins* in particular, for which, of all others, God is most offended at us; and yet *that Sin*, which the Generality of this People, the Body of the Nation, is *unawaken'd* to, and thinks least of: I mean our *Infidelity* and *Unbelief*—our *Deism* or *Arianism* so artfully cover'd over with the Name and Shew of Christianity—our *slighting*, nay *rejecting* the Gospel of his dear Son, in its Powers of *Awakening*;<sup>k</sup> convincing of

<sup>i</sup> Matth. iii. 2.

<sup>k</sup> John v. 25. Eph. ii. 1, 5, 14.

*Sin, Righteousness and Judgment;*<sup>1</sup> *Inspiration;*<sup>m</sup> and Indwelling of the SPIRIT;<sup>n</sup> — its Blessings of Pardon and ° Peace with GOD, taking away the Guilt; and Holiness of Heart and Life, removing also the Defilement and Pollution of Sin<sup>p</sup> — all of them the *peculiar, distinguishing, and fundamental* Doctrines of the *English Church!*

13. Now; had the Eyes of this People been open, they might have seen, how *expressive* and *significant* of their great Sin against both the *Gospel* and their *own Church*, the *threatened* Punishment was. For were not all the enraged Powers of *Popery* coming, *fraught* with hellish Revenge, to overthrow the Blessings of the *Reformation*? those Blessings which we had *long since* cast at our Heels, excepting only in *bare Profession* and outward *Shew* and *Formality*.

14. BUT GOD, notwithstanding this Provocation, had a Favour for us, and prevented their malicious Designs. And *that*, I verily believe, for the Sake of the *real Christians*, the *true Believers*; or those that with broken and penitent Hearts are looking to be *such* among us: waiting for the *farther* Success of both the *Gospel* and the *Reformed* Religion, which *of late* have began to be restored in this Land: or designing, (in case they be absolutely and finally rejected) to let the *despised* Blessing be yet ravish'd from us; or to cut off this *Unbelieving*, and *therefore* wicked People, in a Judgment (it may be) more remarkably from Himself.

15. How *expressive*, I say, of our great *unrepented* Sin——our *Infidelity* and *Rejection* of the *Gospel*——our *putting it from us* (as the Unbelievers

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 8.

<sup>m</sup> John iii. 8.

<sup>n</sup> John vii. 38, 39.

° Matth. ix. 2. Rom. v. 1. <sup>p</sup> Rom. vi. 4, 5, 6. <sup>i</sup> Pet. i.

15, 16.—ii. 9.



of old did<sup>9</sup>) in its two chief Blessings, *Justification* and *Sanctification*—*Pardon* and *Holiness*—that Gospel! so interwoven in every Part of our *English Church*, and breath'd throughout her *Liturgy*, *Articles*, and *Homilies*! How *significant* of this GREAT SIN was our *menaced* Punishment! Oh that there had been so much Knowledge in the People of this Land, or in their *Spiritual Governors*, as to have *seen* this their Sin! Had there been, it would have brought them e'er now to true Repentance. And then, *then* the LORD would have return'd to them in Mercy, and there would be no fearful Expectation of *yet impending* Wrath: which will certainly (for the Sword has wrought no Repentance *generally* speaking) burst out upon us, if we do not *now*, *repent and believe the Gospel*, if we return not to the *first Love* of our *Reformed Church*, if we do not *preach* and *receive* her Doctrines, and *breathe* Her Spirit.

16. INDEED, my Brethren, (Oh that I could speak this into the Hearts of all the People of this Land!) *Here* is the GREAT SIN—the *undream't-of* Sin!

*Hoc Fonte derivata clades*

In Latium [*Angliam*] Populumque fluxit:  
*This* Rejection, I say, of the fore-mention'd Blessings of the Gospel, and the Preference of a Religion, that gives the Glory to Man and not to GOD, (for *being ignorant of GOD's Righteousness, and going about to establish our own Righteousness, we neither have nor do submit to the Righteousness of GOD*<sup>9</sup>) this Preference of a bare, weak, *unpractised*, Natural Religion, is the Source of all our lesser Sins,—*Profaneness, Injustice, and Self-Idolatry*. For were the Gospel received (however we may *fancy* Christianity among us) it would

<sup>9</sup> Acts xiii. 46.

<sup>\*</sup> Rom. x. 3.

prove *still*, as it always did, to be the *Power of GOD to Salvation*—even that Power, that would make us Live (what we are falsely call'd) *Christians*.

17. AND from the same Spring flow also our *private and political Vices*.—Our *Intemperance, Luxury, and Extravagance*; the Gospel teaching us every where, *to walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness; nor making Provision for the Flesh* (the sole Employment of the *great and busy World!*) *to fulfil the Lusts thereof*.<sup>\*</sup> Nay, our *political Vices*, I have said; (for no Man but a *Christian* can for God's Sake obey the Powers that be, as his *Ordinance*<sup>u</sup>)—our *Factions, our Party-Quarrels, and Contentions*—our *Insurrections and Rebellions*: And to give it the mildest Name it can admit of, our *Insensibility* under a mild and equitable Government—our *Unthankfulness* under the greatest temporal Blessings,—*Liberty, Laws, Property!* such as are not enjoy'd by any other People on the Face of the Earth. And yet *such* Blessings, as (for *these* our Sins,) our *Deadly Enemies* made *long Strides* to deprive us of: Nay, and had effectually done it, had not God (in *Mercy still* for this People) bless'd our great *Deliverer*, as he did *Joshua and Gideon* and *David* heretofore against the *Enemies* of his Religion and People—had He not bless'd our English *HERO WILLIAM Duke of Cumberland* with Success against them—had He not inspir'd him with *Conduct* as well as *personal Bravery and Courage*. Had not God thus appear'd in our Favour, when *we had no Might,*<sup>w</sup> nor (what is worse) *were our Eyes upon him,*<sup>w</sup> what could have pre-

<sup>\*</sup> Rom. i. 16.

<sup>u</sup> Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

<sup>w</sup> — xiii. 1.

<sup>ww</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 12.

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vented our Liberty from being Swallowed up in foreign Slavery? What could have prevented the long renown'd *England*——*the Seat of Freedom!* from being a *Province to France?* What could have hindered this *free People* from being ruled *with a Rod of Iron*; from being subjected to Lawless Tyranny and Arbitrary Power? How must our Goddess *Liberty* have been shackled, and *Property* become the Prey of the Oppressive Invader? To say no more, had not God in Compassion and Long-Suffering unspeakable to a People whom he loves for the Sake of that *Vine* which he *both planted* among them:<sup>\*</sup> Had he not rais'd up a *Native* of our own Land, descended from a long Line of *English Kings*: What could have prevented our *Gracious Sovereign* and his *Royal Family* from being dethron'd and murder'd; and as many of his Subjects as *dared* to be loyal and religious, from being tortured by *Popish Inquisition*, and Deaths of sundry Kinds, ready prepared for them?

18. BUT, blessed be His holy Name *this Day!* Our God, (would I could add, in whom we trusted!) has yet delivered us from all these Evils. O my Brethren, let our *utter Indesert* of the Blessings of *this Day enhance* our Gratitude for them. And let the great Work that God has *freely wrought* amongst us, for near these ten Years past, and His Desire, that it go on to the *Restoration* of the Gospel, and the *Re-establishment* of the *English reformed Church*, be looked upon as *one Reason* (if I may presume to assign any other than His *undeserved* Mercy and Love) of this peculiar Favour shown us. For, (to speak as moderately as may be, of the Things that God has lately done amongst us, and as far as possible to avoid giving Offence to the Un-



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awakened and prejudiced, and yet to declare the Truth) when has there been such a Work since the first Establishment of Christianity in this Island, as we have seen with our own Eyes? Excepting indeed (what we sorely lament) that Spirit of *Antinomianism*,<sup>y</sup> and *Solifidianism*<sup>y</sup> (as Satan would explain *Sola fide*) which in purer Ages than ours have attended the Gospel preached in Truth<sup>y</sup> — except-

yyy I might have said in the very Beginning of Christianity. That Satan (till he is chain'd down in the Bottomless Pit,) will never suffer the Gospel to be preached εν ειλικρινεία, εν αφθαρσία, in Sincerity, in Purity, without either opposing it directly and openly; or more subtly mimicking it to pervert it; or further yet, explaining its Power and Efficacy away by his Instruments, ungracious Men, whether learned or unlearned (assuredly untaught of God) is plain from our LORD's own Parable of the Tares, Matth. xiii. 25, 28. and from St. Paul's Account of the false Teachers in the Church of Corinth, who built Wood, Hay, Stubble upon CHRIST the Foundation. That St. Paul's Doctrine of Justification by Faith only, and concerning the Works of the Law, was both misunderstood and abused by the Servants of the Devil — hypocritical and designing Men, is as plain from St. Peter's, St. James's, and St. Jude's Epistles, which the World had never seen, but for the Infidels, Antinomians, Solifidians, and Gnosticks, who sprang from Nicholas of Antioch (a Man once full of Faith and of the Holy Ghost) and from Simon Magus, who himself also believed: but alas! it was in the mistaken Sense of believe only; as "believe before Repentance, or without Repentance, which yet in our LORD's Design always go together," — "believe hastily before you are fitted for it by Grace" — "believe only, without looking for the Effects or Fruits of Faith, either its holy Tempers in the Heart, or its good Works," (without which it is dead) in the Life.

It is probable also, that the World had never seen St. John's Epistles (such Good does God bring out of the Devil's Evil!) but for Ebion and Cerinthus, who, with our modern Arians and Self-sufficient Naturalists, denied the Divinity of that God, who bought and redeemed them with his Blood. It is evident farther, that one principal End of St. John's Epistles was to correct those who wrested St. Paul to their own Destruction; even those, who held, that "Faith without Works," "that believing only, without doing Righteousness was sufficient to final Salvation," "that Men might be Children of Light, and yet walk in Darkness" and "Favourites of God without Obedience to his Laws and Love to his Children."

Now, if preaching the Truth of the Gospel has in all Ages been followed by Heresy, at least Falsehood, why not now? I have said this to stop the Mouths of the unawaken'd World, so loud against the Mischiefs of Methodism, as they themselves mis-call the Truth; and to shew, that our Antinomians, Predestinarians, and Solifidians, are rather Arguments against them; that the Truth is preached.

ing that Spirit of Contempt of Divine Ordinances—that Spirit *crept in unawares!* turning the Grace of God *into Lasciviousness*, lessening the Power of the *New-birth*, and pleading for Corruption and Sin; “because God has decreed moral Evil from all Eternity”—excepting for this *Flie among the Ointment*, this *Leaven of Hypocrisy* which appears among *some*, that are also by the World stiled *Methodists*, (Tares being always sown with the Wheat, a *sure Sign that Wheat is sown*) excepting *these Things*, I say, When has there been such an Effusion of the Spirit of Grace—such an out-pouring of that *Unc-tion* from Above, that must make Men *Christian* indeed? *When* has there been *shed forth* such a Spirit of Love—so *disinterested* a Concern for the Salvation of Men’s Souls—such Love to God and Man, *the fulfilling of the Whole Law*—such *inward* and *outward* Religion, *testified* by holy Tempers *within*, and by Amendment of Life and good Works *without*; and *that* among the very *Outcasts* of Men: Notwithstanding, that *some* who likewise are Branded with the *Offence of the Cross* (because they preach *some* of its Truths) do write and have written against all “*Marks and Evidences* (I fear against *all Power of Faith*) in order to attain the Knowledge of our Interest in CHRIST?” *When* has there been so *pure* a Work? So clear of many Mistakes committed by (otherwise) well meaning Men, (but bearing Evil-will at *Sion*) among the several *Dissenters* heretofore † as has been seen among *those* of the *Methodists* (the *English Methodists*, if I also may call Names) who *adhere stedfastly* to the Doctrines of the *Church of England*? *When* has there appeared such a *single Eye*—such a Test of Sincerity in *Conformity* to the Sufferings and Hu-

† See Mr. *Wesley’s* last *Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*.

miliation of CHRIST—such a Desire of *Drinking* into his Spirit—into the *Power* of his divine *Names and Offices*; of his Cross; of his Death and Resurrection—such a Hunger and Thirst after CHRIST'S Righteousness, both *imputed* and *imparted*—such a Desire of *meaning* something by *Christianity*, or *experiencing* in the inmost Soul by the [ΕΛΥΧΘ] *Evidence, Demonstration* of Faith, *that this is JESUS, that this is CHRIST?* When has there been such an Eagerness of Souls going on to *Perfection*—looking to be like their Master in *Time*, that they may be like Him to all *Eternity*? To say no more, *when* has there been *such a Work*; and what a *Miracle* that it has been attended with so few Inadvertencies and Mistakes, considering how *utterly* the *Spirit and Power* of the Gospel has been *lost* among us, and how well satisfied we have been with the *Name*? When, I say, has there been such a Work, and *that* in so *short* a Time? I challenge the *English Annals* to produce such an Instance.

19. BUT I proceed from this short, tho' necessary Digression, to the *Second Thing* I proposed in this Discourse; and which was to shew *how* we should express our Gratitude to God, for the great Blessing which we are this Day by Authority called together to commemorate.

20. AND first, Let us thank God by our Unfeigned *Repentance*. This Kind of Thanksgiving (for it implies the *forsaking of Sin*)<sup>a</sup> will seem as odd to one unacquainted with the *Spirit* of Religion, as that great *Paradox* of the Apostle's, *as sorrowful yet always rejoicing*. But, let us apply to God for the Grace of *Repentance*;<sup>a</sup> for, as I have said, we can no more repent of *ourselves* than we

• See Church-Catechism.

• Acts v. 31.



can thank Him of ourselves. The Repentance or Thanksgiving that is *barely* human or of ourselves is always *superficial* and ends commonly with the *Formality* of the Day. Let us repent not barely for gross outward Sins; (the *Unawakened* who know nothing of *Heart Sin* may sorrow a little for *this*) but let us beg of God to open our Eyes to look into the *Source* of these Sins—to shew us the utter De-filement of our Nature. Let us repent for the *Concurrence* of our Will in the Fall of *Adam*, in whom *we all sinned*<sup>b</sup>—for our having lost our *Essence*, our Happiness, our *All* in the Loss of the Divine Image<sup>c</sup>—for that Spirit of *Self-sufficiency* and *Independance*, whereby we set up to be Gods *ourselves*.<sup>d</sup> Let us repent for our *Insensibility* if not *Contempt* of the Blessings and Promises of the Gospel—for our denying CHRIST in his *present* Blessings of *Pardon* and *Holiness*—our *Contempt* of his Spirit—for our having *resisted the HOLY GHOST*, and having *denied his Agency, Inspiration*<sup>e</sup>— in a Word, for our having *spoken against him* (a common Sin tho' not thought so) in every Step of his Work of Grace in the Soul of Man, viz. his *reproving* or *convincing* the World of *Sin*, of *Righteousness*, and of *Judgment*.<sup>f</sup> Particularly, for our calling his Repentance, *Melancholly Madness*: His precious Gift of Pardon of Sin, or Peace with God, or Sense of God's pardoning Love; *Presumption*: His Holiness of Heart, that is, Love of God, or Likeness to God; *Blasphemy*.

21. AND then, Secondly, (for Repentance prepareth for the Kingdom of God, and maketh it *at hand*)<sup>g</sup> let us express our Gratitude for the Bless-

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 22.

<sup>c</sup> Rom. iii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. iii. 5.

<sup>e</sup> See Col. before Com. Office.

<sup>f</sup> Joh. xvi. 8.

<sup>g</sup> Matth. iii. 2. Mar. i. 15.

ings of the Day, by a hearty and *unfeigned* Acceptance of the Gospel. I mean, not in Form only,<sup>h</sup> as we have *hitherto* done; but in the Power thereof—it's *Power to Salvation*<sup>i</sup>—*present* Salvation, both as to the Guilt and Pollution of Sin; that *so* we may be saved also from the *Wages* thereof *hereafter*.<sup>k</sup>

22. BUT, in order hereto, let us call back our Church, (if there be any of her Sons *whom she bringeth up*, that will take her by the Hand<sup>l</sup>) and we shall in *her* receive the Gospel *again*: For *she* breatheth its *Spirit* throughout, and loudly proclaims its Blessings to all her *faithful* Children. For Instance; upon our *true Repentance*, she tells us, that God *doth* pardon (*in præsenti*) All those that *Unfeignedly* believe his holy Gospel<sup>m</sup>—that after we *worthily* lament our Sins and acknowledge our *Wretchedness*, we obtain *perfect* Forgiveness<sup>n</sup>—that God giveth us his Holy Spirit, that our Lives *thereafter* may be pure and holy, *so* that at the last we may come to his eternal Joy through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.<sup>o</sup> She tells her Children that God *teacheth* their Hearts,<sup>p</sup> and giveth them a *right Judgment* in all Things.<sup>p</sup> She prays, that He would *defend* them *with* his heavenly Grace, that *so* they may *continue* HIS for ever, and daily increase *more and more* in his Holy Spirit, 'till they come to his everlasting Kingdom<sup>q</sup>—that as He has forgiven her believing Sons, (her *Christian* and *Spiritual* Children) *All* their Sins, He would *strengthen* them with the HOLY GHOST the Comforter, and *daily* increase in them his manifold Gifts of Grace.<sup>r</sup> She prays *Day by Day* that we

<sup>h</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 5.

<sup>i</sup> Rom. i. 16.

<sup>k</sup> Rom. vi. 23.

<sup>l</sup> Isa. li. 17, 18, 19.

<sup>m</sup> See her Form of Absolution; or rather her Manner of proclaiming and offering the Blessings of the Gospel to her People.

<sup>n</sup> Col. for Ash-wednesday.

<sup>o</sup> Form of Absolution.

<sup>p</sup> Col. for Whitsunday.

<sup>q</sup> Read over

her Confirmation-Office.

fall into *no Sin*<sup>a</sup>——that God would *make Speed* to save us from Sin, even NOW——that he would *make haste* to help us<sup>c</sup> (the *earnest Cry* of a *convinc-ed* Soul that *feels* what Sin is!). She prays, that her faithful [believing] People may obtain *Pardon* and *Peace*, and that they may be cleansed from ALL their Sins,<sup>u</sup>——that we may be *regenerate*, and made God's Children by Adoption and Grace, and that we may be *daily renewed*<sup>w</sup>——that we may be *purified* even as he is pure<sup>x</sup>——that by the *Inspira-tion* of his Holy Spirit, the Thoughts [Affections, Tempers, and Inclinations] of our Hearts may be *cleansed*, yea, *so* cleansed that we may *perfectly* love God, and *testify* this Love by worthily mag-nifying his Holy Name<sup>y</sup>.—She prays that we may evermore *Rejoice* in his holy Comforts<sup>z</sup>——that we may have *Power and Strength* to have Victory, and to *triumph* against the *World*, the *Devil* and the *Flesh*<sup>a</sup>——yea, that we may *utterly abolish the whole Body* of Sin<sup>b</sup>, and so be able to serve him in *Holiness* and *Pureness* of Life, to his Honour and Glory<sup>c</sup>. She professes that her Clergy *duly* or-dained, *are moved by the Holy Ghost*. To say no more, she bids us look up to CHRIST not only as a *Sacrifice* for Sin, but also an *Example* of Godly Life<sup>d</sup>, and tells us, that our Profession (our *Busi-ness* as Christians) is to *follow the Example* of our Saviour CHRIST, and (as in the *first* Creation) to be made *like unto Him*.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 3d Col. Morning Service.

<sup>z</sup> Suffrages after the LORD's

Prayer, so little reflected on by the *lifeless* Suppliant! so contrary to the Wishes of the *hypocritical* Professor, who seeks for no *Salva-tion from Sin* in this Life, *i. e.* so long as he can enjoy it!

<sup>u</sup> Col. 19th Sund. after Trin.

<sup>w</sup> Col. Christmas-day.

<sup>x</sup> Sixth Sund. after Epiph.

<sup>y</sup> Col. Com Office.

<sup>z</sup> Col. Whitsunday.

<sup>ab</sup> Office of Publick Baptism.

<sup>c</sup> Col. End of the Lit.

<sup>d</sup> Second Sunday after Easter.

<sup>e</sup> The *peculiar* Doctrines of the *English Methodists*, whereby they are *distinguish'd* from others, branded with that Name!



23. LET us, Thirdly, not only express our Gratitude to God on this Occasion by sincere and *unfeigned* Repentance, whereby our Ungodly, our Unrighteous, our Impure Lives *be amended* (for so long as our *own* *Rebellions* and Wars against Heaven last, how can we fondly dream the Danger over? and indeed if the Sword has wrought no Repentance, some heavier Judgment *must* come :) Let us not only, I say, praise God by our *true* Repentance, and by accepting again of his Gospel IN our excellent *Church*: Which, 'tis plain, I have said, (plain from the *menaced* Punishment) that God is angry with us for having *lost*,<sup>f</sup>

24. BUT let us *further* testify our *Thanksgiving* (I speak now to all Denominations of *Protestants* among us) by *Union* of Heart and Doctrine—by *Forbearance* and *Long-suffering* towards each other, till we shall *All* be of *one* Mind. — *Forbearance*, and Moderation (and may the LORD pour down those Graces upon all the *sincere* Sects in this Land!) towards those who differ in *Circumstantial*s only, but *Unite* in the ONE Thing *necessary*—(necessary to a Creature, with whom God is justly offended, and who by seeking to be happy in other Things *independently* of God<sup>g</sup>, is *therefore* deeply polluted and miserable) *even*, the *Peace* and *Love* of GOD; or *Pardon* of Sin, and Holiness of Heart; or *such* Power against the common Adversary, the *Devil*, as shall *reverse* *All* the Damages of the *Fall*—deliver us (*this* is the *Redemption* through CHRIST) from the Usurpation of the *Tyrant*; and make every Individual of *Protestants*

<sup>f</sup> Am I call'd upon for Proof? I answer, that it is too true in *Fact*. For can a Church, *such as Ours is*, exist, with all her Powers and Blessings of *Unction* or *Inspiration*, Repentance, Pardon of Sin, Holiness of Heart and Life, *i. e.* *Love of GOD and Man*, and yet her Members (in the general and of all Denominations both Clerical and Lay) be so abandoned to all Religion as *we* are?

<sup>g</sup> Gen. iii. 5.

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among us, not only *Members* of CHRIST and *Children* of GOD; but *Priests* also and *Kings* to GOD and his FATHER!

25. LET us look to the GOD of Peace to heal all our *Political* Divisions, and *Party* Quarrels; that there be no Emulations, no Contentions among *Englishmen* and *Protestants*, but who shall be most faithful to our Sovereign Lord GEORGE, both as our *Political* Father, and *Defender* of our Faith. Let us *All* universally combine against those *turbulent* and *unruly* Spirits, who valuing neither their Religion nor the Blessings of Peace and mild Government under their *lawful* Prince, are madly looking for a *Popish* Tyrant, who would soon overturn both. Let us strenuously unite together against the false and cursed *Maxims* of those *Political* Enthusiasts who maintain the *hereditary* and *indefeasible* Right of an abjured Pretender to the Throne of these Kingdoms—*Maxims* so directly opposite not only to our *happy* Constitution both in *Church* and *State*, but to Scripture and right Reason! Let *Protestants* of all Denominations guard cautiously against the *Jacobite* Party—the *Nonjuring* Clergy and Laity, who are really more to be dreaded than profess'd *Papists*. But above all, let us daily look up unto God, that through the *Power* of his Grace, he would make us *Christians* indeed—not almost (as a great Man had like once to have been) but altogether *Christians*,<sup>i</sup> for none but *real* *Christians* can love God and their King for *Conscience* Sake. None but *true* *Christians* can be eminent in all *relative* Duties. None but *Christians* indeed can faithfully serve, honour and humbly obey their *gracious* Sovereign Lord King GEORGE, in God and for God.

26. Now a *Word* to two Sorts of People among us, who make up the whole Church both *inward*

<sup>i</sup> Acts xxvi. 27, 29.

and outward, and I have done—to those who mean nothing by the Church of England but the outward FORM (or if any Thing of Substance; only her *fat Livings*, as they too properly speak) and to those who look for the Power of the Gospel—the Power of God to Salvation from Sin, in her Evangelical Constitution.

27. AND, my Brethren, you have both Reason (tho' not equal Reason) to rejoice on the *present* Occasion. For even Ye that are satisfied with the FORM instead of the Power of Religion, have occasion to rejoice; for that God has defeated the Enemies of your FORM (but alas! What have some been contending for to this Day of Conquest? for the *Phantom* of Christianity! the *Shadow* of a Church!) for indeed your *Form* is better than the Substance of Popery: I speak with regard to the *Twelve Articles* added to their *Creed* by the *Council of Trent*. Though, let me tell you, both your FORM and their *Substance* are equally *ineffectual* to the *purifying* of the Heart (such Power belongeth to FAITH only!)<sup>k</sup> or the Restoration of the Divine Life in it. You *Speculatists* in Christianity who mean little by JESUS,<sup>l</sup> or CHRIST,<sup>m</sup> or IMMANUEL,<sup>n</sup> may now (now that all is safe again *with you*) return to your former Slumber. And as ye will not, ye *will not*, I say,<sup>o</sup> be awakened by that Spirit that is gone forth from the LORD, and has *awakened* some Thousands in this Land, to *Righteousness*: Ye may sleep on, on the other Side, 'till Death or the last Trump awaken you. This your FORM, the *Temple of the Lord*, the *Temple of the Lord*, the *Temple of the Lord*,<sup>p</sup> may still *amuse* you, and make you think

<sup>k</sup> Acts xv. 9. Mark ix. 23.

<sup>l</sup> Matt. i. 21.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 12. 1 John ii. 20, 27.

<sup>n</sup> Matt. i. 23.

<sup>o</sup> & *Deus est in Deo*. John v. 40.

<sup>p</sup> Jer. vii. 4.



yourselves the Children of *Abraham*—*Staunch Church of England Men!*—Not only good *Protestants* but *real Christians*. To say no more, this your *Formality* may in a great measure satisfy your Souls and keep them in a *false Peace*,<sup>a</sup> 'till ye shall (for want of the *Power* of the Divine *Unction*, literally *Christianity*) 'till ye shall fall, I say, stript of the Image of God,<sup>r</sup> and with all the evil *Temper*s that Satan *spoke* into the Soul;—into an endless *Eternity*.

28. BUT O! (*It becometh well the Just* to be thankful!) what exceeding great Reason have ye, (*ye that look for the Power* of the Gospel in your Church!) to be thankful! And *how* will ye praise your GOD, *not only with your Lips, but in your Lives, by giving up yourselves to his Service, and by walking before him in Holiness and Righteousness all your Days*: For that he has *rescued* your Church, in which you have *Communion with all Saints*, from her deadly *Enemies*; and has continued to you in *her* all the Blessings both preparatory to the Gospel, (even that *Repentance*, or *deep-feeling* of your Condition, that *fits* you for the Gospel) and the Gospel itself—*present Substantial Blessings! Justification! Pardon of Sin! and Peace with God! Sanctification!* that *Power* of God's Spirit, whereby you are *created anew; born again* of GOD; *so* born of Him, that ye commit not Sin;<sup>r</sup> and are made *again* Partakers of the Divine Nature!

29. O my Beloved! I will rejoice with you, with the best Member that we have, *in the best Manner* that we can—singing with the *Spirit* and singing with the *Understanding* also—a reasonable Service this! Sing Praises then unto the LORD O ye *Saints of his*, and give Thanks unto him for a Remembrance of his Holiness. Let us Magnify

<sup>a</sup> Luke xi. 21.

<sup>r</sup> Gen. iii. 7.

<sup>r</sup> 1 John iii. 9.

Thce, O LORD, for Thou hast set us up, and not made our Foes to Triumph over us. Praise the LORD O our Souls; and all that is within us praise his holy Name; praise the LORD our Souls, and forget not *these* his Benefits. For he forgiveth all our Sins, and healeth all our Infirmities; he saveth our Life from Destruction and crowneth us with Mercy and Loving-kindness.

30. I will close all with an Anthem in three Parts, collected on the Occasion. The First Part by the King himself, the Second by the People, and the Third by the King and People together.

## P A R T I.

BLESSED be the LORD my Strength, who teacheth my Hands to War and my Fingers to fight. — My Hope and my Fortref, my Castle and Deliverer, my Defender, in whom I Trust, who hath subdued my People that is under me. — I will sing a new Song unto Thee O God; and sing Praises unto Thee upon a ten-stringed Lute. — For thou hast given Victory unto WILLIAM whose Eyes were up unto Thee, and hast delivered GEORGE thy Servant from the Peril of the Sword.

## P A R T II.

LET the People also praise Thee O God; yea let all the People praise Thee, and say, O sing unto the LORD a new Song, for He hath done marvelous Things. — With his own right Hand and with his holy Arm hath He gotten himself the Victory. — The LORD looked down from Heaven; He beheld and visited his Vine and the Place of his Vineyard that his Right Hand had planted, and the Branch that he made so strong for himself. — For we gat not the Land in Possession through our own Sword, neither was it our own Arm that helped us. — But thy Right Hand, and thine Arm, and the Light of thy Countenance, even, because Thou hadst a Favour for us.

## P A R T III.

GOD is our Hope and Strength, a very present Help in Trouble. — Therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be moved: Though the Waters thereof rage and swell. — For He stilleth the raging of the Sea, and the Noise of his Waves, and the Madnes of the People. — GOD is in the Midst of us, therefore shall we not be removed. — GOD hath helped us, and that right early. — Happy! happy! are the People that are in such a Case. Yea blessed are the People who have the LORD for their God.